

Statewide Family Support Center NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2 • Issue 6

MARCH 2006



*Serving Kentucky's Families
with Children Who are Deaf
and Hard of Hearing*

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The SFSC is part of the Kentucky School for the Deaf Outreach Services and the Statewide Educational Resource Center on Deafness, components of the Kentucky Department of Education.

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DEAF – BLINDNESS

Diane Haynes, M.Ed Kentucky DeafBlind Project Coordinator

We are continuing the series of articles on various topics of interest to families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. We know that some families are very new to all of this. Some of the terms we use might not make a lot of sense right now. Please don't give up... read this little bit by little bit... read it again and again. Call, email or write to ask questions

The SFSC appreciates Diane Haynes for providing the information in our lead article. Diane is the State Coordinator of the the DeafBlind Project. You can contact her with questions at 229 Taylor Education Building, Lexington, KY 40506 OR 1867 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, KY 40206; Call her: 502-897-1583 ext. 279 (v) or email her at dhaynes@ksb.k12.ky.us

For those who have access to the Internet, you can download copies of any of our Newsletters at www.ksd.k12.ky.us. After you enter the website, click on the "Family Information" button and then click to either open the current SFSC Newsletter or open any of the archived newsletters. Pat and Cathy



What Is Deaf-Blindness?

It may seem that deaf-blindness refers to a total inability to see or hear. However, in reality, deaf-blindness is a condition in which there is a combination of visual and hearing impairments that cause "such severe communication and other developmental and learning needs that the persons cannot be appropriately educated in special education programs solely for children and youth with hearing impairments, visual impairments or severe disabilities, without supplementary assistance to address their educational needs due to these dual, concurrent disabilities" (1990, IDEA, Sec. 622). Children who are called deaf-blind are singled out educationally because impairments of sight and hearing require thoughtful and unique educational approaches in order to ensure that children with this disability have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

A person who is deaf-blind has a unique experience of the world. For people who can see and hear, the world extends outward as far as his or her eyes and ears can reach. For the young child who is deaf-blind, the world is initially much narrower. If the child is profoundly deaf and totally blind, his or her experience of the world extends only as far as the fingertips can reach. Such children are effectively alone if no one is touching them. Their concepts of the world depend upon what or whom they have had the opportunity to physically contact.

If a child who is deaf-blind has some usable vision and/or hearing, as many do, her or his world will be enlarged. Many children called deaf-blind have enough vision to be able to move about in their environments, recognize familiar people, see sign language at close distances, and perhaps read large print. Others have sufficient hearing to recognize familiar sounds, understand some speech, or develop speech themselves. The range of

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sensory impairments included in the term "deaf-blindness" is great.

Who is Deaf-Blind, and what are the causes of Deaf-Blindness?

As far as it has been possible to count them, there are about 10,000 children (ages birth to 22 years) in the United States who have been classified as deaf-blind (Baldwin, 1994). It has been estimated that the adult deaf-blind population numbers 35-40,000 (Watson, 1993). The causes of deaf-blindness are many.

Deaf-Blindness is often accompanied by additional disabilities. Causes such as maternal rubella can also affect the heart and the brain. Some genetic syndromes or brain injuries that cause deaf-blindness may also cause developmental delays and/or physical disabilities.

What are the Challenges Facing a Person who is Deaf-Blind?

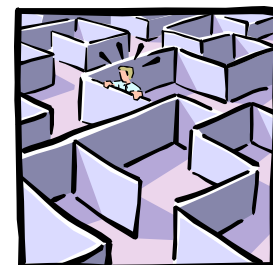


A person who is deaf-blind must somehow make sense of the world using the limited information available to him or her. If the person's sensory disabilities are great, and if people in the environment have not made an effort to order the world for him or her in a way that makes it easier to understand, this challenge may be overwhelming. Behavioral and emotional difficulties often accompany deaf-blindness and are the natural outcomes of the child's, or the adult's, inability to understand and communicate.

People who can see and hear often take for granted the information that those senses provide. Events such as the approach of another person, an upcoming meal, the decision to go out, a change in routine are all signaled by sights and sounds that allow a person to prepare for them. The child or adult who misses these cues because of limited sight and/or hearing may come to experience the world as an unpredictable, and possibly threatening, place. To a great extent, persons who are deaf-blind must depend upon the good will and sensitivity of those around them to make their world safe and understandable.

The challenge of learning language is perhaps the greatest one that children who are deaf-blind face. It is also the greatest opportunity, since

language holds the power to make their thoughts, needs, and desires known. The ability to use words can also open up worlds beyond the reach of their fingertips through the use of interpreters, books, and an ever-increasing array of electronic communication devices. In order to learn language, children who are deaf-blind must depend upon others to make language accessible to them. Given that accessibility, children who are deaf-blind face the challenges of engaging in interactions to the best of their abilities and of availing themselves of the language opportunities provided for them.



A person who is deaf-blind also faces, further, the challenge of learning to move about in the world as freely and independently as possible. Adult individuals also must eventually find adult living and work situations that allow them to use their talents and abilities in the best way possible. Many adults who are deaf-blind lead independent or semi-independent lives and have productive work and enjoyable social lives. The achievement of such success depends in large part not only on the severity of their impairments but also upon the education they have received since childhood, and particularly upon the communication with others that they have been able to develop.

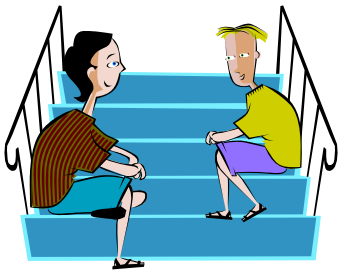
What are the Particular Challenges Facing the Family, Teachers and Caregivers of a Person who is Deaf-Blind?

Communication - The disability of deaf-blindness places unique demands upon families, teachers, and caregivers who must make sure that the person who is deaf-blind has access to the world beyond the limited reach of his or her eyes, ears, and fingertips. The people in the environment of children, or adults, who are deaf-blind, must seek to include them – moment-by-moment – in the flow of life and in the physical environments that surround them. If they do not, the child will be isolated and will not have the opportunity to grow and to learn. If they do, the child will be afforded the opportunity to develop to his or her fullest potential.

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The most important challenge for parents, caregivers, and teachers, is to communicate meaningfully with the child who is deaf-blind. Continual good communication will help foster his or her healthy development. Communication involves much more than mere language. Good communication can best be thought of as conversation. Conversations employ body language and gestures, as well as both signed and spoken words. A conversation with a child who is deaf-blind can begin with a partner who simply notices what the child is paying attention to at the moment and finds a way to let the child know that his or her interest is shared.



This shared interest, once established, can become a topic around which a conversation can be built. Mutual conversational topics are typically established between a parent and a sighted or hearing child by making eye contact

and by gestures such as pointing or nodding, or by exchanges of sounds and facial expressions. Lacking significant amounts of sight and hearing, children who are deaf-blind will often need touch in order for them to be sure that their parent shares their focus of attention. The parent or teacher may, for example, touch an interesting object along with the child in a nondirective way. Or, the mother may imitate a child's movements, allowing the child tactual access to that imitation, if necessary. (This is the tactual equivalent of the actions of a mother who instinctively imitates her child's babbling sounds.) Establishing a mutual interest like this will open up the possibility for conversational interaction.

Teachers and parents can continue conversations with children who are deaf-blind by learning to pause after the initial topic has been established. These children frequently have very slow response times. Respecting the child's own timing is crucial to establishing successful interactions. Pausing long enough to allow the child to take another turn in the interaction, then responding to that turn, pausing again, and so on – this back-and-forth exchange becomes a

conversation. Such conversations, repeated consistently, build relationships and become the eventual basis for language learning.

As the child who is deaf-blind becomes comfortable interacting nonverbally with others, she or he becomes ready to receive some form of symbolic communication as part of those interactions. Often it is necessary to precede the introduction of words with the use of simple gestures and/or objects which serve as symbols or representations for activities. Doing so may help a child develop the understanding that one thing can stand for another.

Think of the many thousands of words and sentences that most children hear before they speak their own first words. A child who is deaf-blind needs comparable language stimulation, adjusted to his or her ability to receive and make sense of it. Parents, caregivers, and teachers face the challenge of providing an environment rich in language that is meaningful and accessible to the child who is deaf-blind. Only with such a rich language environment will the child have the opportunity to acquire language herself or himself. Those around the child can create a rich language environment by continually commenting on the child's own experiences using sign language, speech, or whatever symbol system is accessible to the child. These comments

are best made during conversational interactions. A teacher or a parent may, for example, use gesture or sign language to name the object that he or she and the child are both touching, or name the movement that they share. This naming of objects and actions, done many, many times, may begin to give the child who is deaf-blind a similar opportunity afforded to the hearing child – that of making meaningful connections between words and the things for which they stand.



Principal communication systems for persons who are deaf-blind are these:

- * touch cues
- * gestures
- * object symbols

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COMPLEX NEEDS *continued from Page 3*

- * picture symbols
- * fingerspelling
- * Signed English
- * Pidgin Signed English
- * Braille writing and reading
- * Tadoma method of speech reading
- * American Sign Language
- * large print writing and reading
- * lip-reading speech

Along with nonverbal and verbal conversations, a child who is deaf-blind needs a reliable routine of meaningful activities, and some way or ways that this routine can be communicated to her or him.

Touch cues, gestures, and use of object symbols are typical ways in which to let a child who is deaf-blind know what is about to happen to her or him. Each time before the child is picked up, for example, the caregiver may gently lift his or her arms a bit, and then pause, giving the child time to ready herself or himself for being handled. Such consistency will help the child to feel secure and to begin to make the world predictable, thus allowing the child to develop expectations. Children and adults who are deaf-blind and are able to use symbolic communication may also be more reliant on predictable routine than people who are sighted and hearing. Predictable routine may help to ease the anxiety which is often caused by the lack of sensory information.



Orientation and Mobility

In addition, the child who is deaf-blind will need help learning to move about in the world. Without vision, or with reduced vision, he or she will not only have difficulty navigating, but may also lack the motivation to move outward in the first place. Helping a young child who is deaf-blind learn to move may begin with thoughtful attention to the physical space around him or her, (crib or other space), so that whatever movements the child instinctively makes are rewarded with interesting stimulation that motivates further movement. Orientation and mobility specialists can help parents and teachers to construct safe and motivating spaces for the young child who is deaf-blind. In many instances children who are

deaf-blind may also have additional physical and health problems that limit their ability to move about. Parents and teachers may need to include physical and occupational therapists, vision teachers, health professionals, and orientation and mobility specialists on the team to plan accessible and motivating spaces for these children. Older children, or adults, who have lost vision can also use help from trained specialists in order to achieve as much confidence and independence as possible in moving about in their world.

Inclusion in Family

Clearly, the challenges for parents, teachers and caregivers of children who are deaf-blind are many. Not least among them is the challenge of including the child in the flow of family and community life. Since such a child does not necessarily respond to care in the ways we might expect, parents will be particularly challenged in their efforts to include her or him. The mother or father of an infant who can see is usually rewarded with smiles and lively eye contact from the child. The parent of a child who is deaf-blind must look for more subtle rewards; small hand or body movements, for instance, may be the child's way of expressing pleasure of connection.



Parents may also need to change their perceptions regarding typical developmental milestones. They can learn, as many have, to rejoice as fully in the ability of their child who is deaf-blind to sign a new word, or to feed herself, or to return a greeting as they do over another child's college scholarship or success in basketball or election to class office.

Parents then, may need to shift expectations and perceptions in significant ways. They also need to do the natural grieving that accompanies the birth of a child who is disabled. Teachers and caregivers must also make these perceptual shifts. Parents' groups and resources for teachers can provide much-needed support for those who live and work with children and adults who are deaf-blind. Such supports will help foster the mutually rewarding inclusion of children who are deaf-blind into their families and communities.

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COMPLEX NEEDS *continued from Page 4*

Summary

Though deaf-blindness presents many unique challenges to both those who have visual and hearing impairments, and to their caregivers and friends, these challenges are by no means insurmountable. Many persons who are deaf-blind have achieved a quality of life that is excellent. The persons who are deaf-blind who have high quality lives have several things in common. First, they have each, in their own way, come to accept the absence of sight and hearing as a life situation which gives them a unique and valuable experience of the world. This fundamental acceptance can occur regardless of the severity of the particular sensory losses or other challenges that a person has. Second, they have had educational experiences which have helped them maximize their abilities to communicate and to function productively.

Finally, these happy, involved persons who are deaf-blind live in families, communities, or social groups that have an attitude of welcoming acceptance. They have friends, relatives, and co-workers who value their presence as individuals with significant contributions to make to the world around them. For those persons with limited sight and hearing, and for those near them, deaf-blindness fosters opportunities for learning and mutual enrichment.

The above information is taken from an article by Barbara Miles. She is a communication specialist/consultant and teacher, experienced with all ages and levels of persons who are deaf-blind. For the entire article, please contact either the SFSC or Diane Haynes.

What Help is Available for Families, Caregivers and Teachers of Children and Adults who are Deaf-Blind?

1. **Kentucky Deaf-Blind Project** (Univ. of Kentucky)
229 Taylor Education Building
Lexington, KY 40506-0001
or
1867 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206
502-8997-1583, ext. 279

502-897-2994 (FAX)
888-899-3247 (TTY)

The Kentucky Deaf-Blind Project provides technical assistance and training to persons who have both vision and hearing challenges, in combination. Services are offered to persons birth to 22 years of age, their families and service providers. There is no fee for services. Services include assisting families to access appropriate medical and school services, assisting with assessments of individuals for the purpose of planning their educational program, assisting with the development and implementation of individual education programs, assisting consumers and families in addressing transition issues, assisting families to network with one another and statewide training on issues specific to deaf-blindness.

2. **American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB)**

814 Thayer Ave., Ste. 302
Silver Spring, MD 20910
TTY: (301) 588-6545
Fax: (301) 588-8705

AADB is a national consumer advocacy organization for people who have combined hearing and vision impairments. AADB is open to persons who are deaf-blind and individuals directly concerned with their well being, including spouses, children, friends, and health care professionals. It seeks to encourage independent living for deaf-blind individuals. The organization also provides technical assistance to persons who are deaf-blind and their families, educators, and service providers.

3. **Kentucky Association of the Deaf-Blind (KADB)**

Shannon Caldwell, President
155 Crescent View Drive #1
London, KY 40741
606-864-7049
sjgc@mis.net

KADB alternates monthly between board meetings and full organization meetings. Membership is open to persons who are deaf-blind, their families, friends, professionals and other persons interested in improving the welfare of individuals who are deaf-blind.

EDITOR'S NOTE: There are several other resources available. Contact Diane Haynes for details.



WORKSHOPS AND PROGRAMS OF INTEREST TO FAMILIES OF DEAF-BLIND CHILDREN

Kentucky Association of Deaf-Blind Retreat – April 7-9 at the Ky Leadership Center in Faubush, KY. This year's program will focus on technology and the presenter will be Anindya Bhattacharyya from the Helen Keller National Center. For more information contact: Christine McCracken, Transition Coordinator, KY Deaf-Blind Project, 502-897-1583, ext. 278

Person-Centered Communication: Teaching Receptive and Expressive Communication Skills to Students with Severe/Multiple Disabilities Including Deaf-Blindness. This workshop is March 27-29 at the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville. Led by Diane Haynes, families and teachers will learn essential methods and strategies used to develop receptive and expressive communication skills for children with severe/multiple disabilities. There is no cost. Call Diane Haynes at 1-502-897-1583 extension 279 or email: dhaynes@ksb.k12.ky.us

Kentucky CHARGE Syndrome Conference for Families – July 7-9 in Louisville. CHARGE is the leading cause of deaf-blindness. For more information, call Diane Haynes at 1-502-897-1583 extension 279 or email: dhaynes@ksb.k12.ky.us



RETREAT FOR FAMILIES WITH DEAF or HARD OF HEARING AUTISTIC CHILDREN

Note: The SFSC Newsletter Editor realizes that this information will arrive to you very close to the deadline for applications. We received the notice recently and wanted to make sure you had the information. Feel free to go ahead and contact the Retreat planners to ask for more information.

Camp Lakodia in Madison, South Dakota is hosting the first-ever retreat for deaf or hard of hearing families with deaf or hard of hearing autistic children on April 7-9, 2006.

This is "an opportunity for parents with autistic children to gather and learn new information and current trends to treat Autism. There will be guest speakers who are experts in the field, support groups, activities, as well as opportunities to exchange ideas and resources."

The registration fee is \$150. per person and the deadline is March 1st. Email Deb Skjeveland, Program Manager at

dskjeveland@camplakodia.org or video phone at dskjeveland.csd.tv for more information.



FAMILY-TO-FAMILY

by Barbie Harris, Danville

Hi Parents!

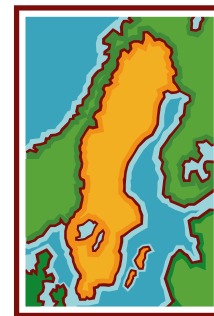
I am a parent of a daughter, Jennifer Harris, currently a senior at Kentucky School for the Deaf. She is presently an exchange student at Manillaskolan School for the Deaf in Stockholm, Sweden since last September. She will return on May 20, 2006 in time for her KSD's graduation on May 25, 2006. Manillaskolan School for the Deaf is a bilingual-bicultural education program since 1970's. I asked Jennifer if she could share what she has learned this past year as a student at Manillaskolan School for the Deaf. Please read her message below as well as her other letters and pictures shown on the KSD's website.

I will be happy to share with you, parents about the philosophy "bilingual-bicultural approach in the next issue.

Here is a letter to you from Jennifer:

Hej!! (Hello!)

I would like to share some things what I learned at Manillaskolan School for the Deaf. The classes that I have been taking since last fall are Science, History, Swedish sign language, Swedish reading and writing language, English, drama, sewing, arts, woodworking, P.E.



and Deaf Culture. I took some classes last fall that met only on certain days which is different from the class schedule in Kentucky where we met everyday. I had English, Swedish, history on Mondays; Tuesdays would be PE, science, Swedish sign language, Wednesdays in other subject areas, etc. I have learned many things here in Sweden which have expanded my knowledge in cultural studies.

The students here at Manillaskolan (short name Manilla) School for the Deaf have different levels of ability and they are not placed in the same class or in mixed ability groups like the KERA has in Kentucky. They are placed by the same ability and career choices. One group includes the

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FAMILY TO FAMILY *continued from Page 6*

high functioning students who have plans to study in college. Another group of students are those



Jennifer's Soccer Team

who are planning to study trading school (Vocational Tech). Other students who are planning to work right after graduation are grouped together to prepare for independent skills training and job training. All of the students learn Swedish sign

language as the first language and also Swedish reading and writing language. They are required to take English, too.

The teachers, both hearing and deaf, are good role models for deaf students by showing POSITIVE ATTITUDE and RESPECT. The students respect the staff, too! The teachers model for the students how to show respect to people and be well prepared for the world. The teachers signs all the time so that the students can pick up the vocabulary.

There are lots and lots of parents who support their deaf children's education and the Manilla School. The parents are very involved with parent groups, meetings and conferences. The parents come to their deaf child's sports and other events to give the support and spirit. Every year the parents have an Open House at the Manilla School and they have a fundraising project to support the school. The parents are required to learn the sign language so that they can communicate with their deaf child. The parents are very strong supporters of their child's needs and the school.

The last thing I would like to say is that I admire the students and staff for their respectful attitude to each other and their motivation for students to learn. The students are matured enough to be ready for outside world. Of course there are few students that might not behave or broke a rule. These students are immediately get their act straighten out with respect quickly.

Farval! (Farewell!)

Jennifer Harris, KSD Exchange Student in Sweden



THE LITERACY CORNER

By Heidi Givens, Teacher of the Deaf

I have been receiving emails from parents with questions about helping children increase their literacy. I am sure that many of you have asked yourself some of the same things. This issue will answer one of those questions. Other questions will be answered in future articles.

Question:

My daughter is getting ready for kindergarten. She can write and recognize the letters of the alphabet but cannot recite them orally or through sign. Is this common with Deaf and hard-of-hearing (D/HH) children? Her teacher says that the other preschoolers cannot do it without singing the song.

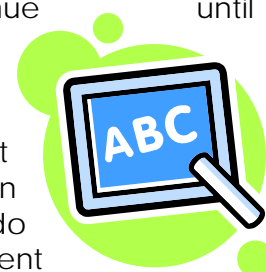
Answer:

Before I started answering this question, I went to the first grade teachers in my school and asked them what hearing children do. Their answer was that in first grade, there are some students who still cannot recite the alphabet without singing the song. Many cannot tell you what comes after "k" without singing the whole song. Therefore, the song is used for many hearing children to assist them. As they get older, they will no longer need the song.

As for our D/HH children, just as with hearing, it varies from child to child. I cannot say that it is common. I teach kindergarten and first grade. Several of my students have mastered reciting them either orally or manually by Christmas. Others still get stuck after a while and need a letter 'fed' to them to continue until the next time they get stuck. Still others need lots of help to get through the alphabet.

My professional opinion is that the variation per child in mastering the alphabet has to do with their language development (whether it is spoken English or sign). I have seen that D/HH children who have a stronger language base can master the alphabet better than those who are still developing a first language. So for those who are still working on basic language concepts, learning to recite the alphabet will take

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LITERACY CORNER *continued from Page 7*

longer to master. The best advice I can give is to make a habit to practice everyday. In my classroom, we practice it every morning as a part of our calendar routine. At home, you can make it a part of the night time bed ritual or practice while getting dressed in the morning. There are also many alphabet books you can get from the library in which each page focuses on the letter of the alphabet. Usually in the back or front is a copy of the entire alphabet. Use that as a tool to teach her the sequence. This gives another visual tool for learning.

Remember that D/HH children can do anything hearing children can do, except hear. It might take them a little longer to get started, but they have the same capabilities. We as parents and educators need to have the same expectations for them as we do for our hearing children.

If you have any questions or comments that you would like addressed in future articles, please email me at heidigasl@yahoo.com or write to SFSC.



THE LISTENING CORNER

In the previous newsletter, we talked about using the "Learning to Listen" sounds and objects to establish auditory awareness and sound/object association for children who have just gotten a cochlear implant or hearing aids. So what comes next? Learning to listen to and understand "common phrases" that you use in everyday situations. Just like with the "Learning to Listen" sounds, your child will start to associate the phrase with its meaning. Each time you repeat the phrase use the same intonational patterns and rhythm. This repetition helps your child to begin to understand what is being said.



Common phrases can be incorporated into any activity. Think about all the routines that you do throughout the day and come up with phrases that match. Here are some examples: "Time for bed," "Time to eat," "Wash your

hands," "Put your shoes on," "Line up," "Go sit down," "Wave bye-bye," "I love you," "Give me a kiss," "Close the door," "Stop that," "What's your name," "It's all gone," and "uh-oh."

At first, use contextual cues and visual prompts to help your child think about what is being said. For example, give your child a tissue, point to the garbage can, and say/sign "throw it away" (make sure you always use your voice when signing). Do this several times and then fade out the visual cues. By eliminating the visual cues, you are helping your child develop his **auditory memory** and **auditory comprehension** of the phrase. Make a common phrase book; look through magazines and find pictures that go with your list of phrases. Use these phrases when playing with your child and his/her toys, such as dolls, "Little People," and cartoon figures. Remember, **Listening comes first** so let your child **hear you** say these phrases over and over to start building his/her foundation for **meaningful language**.



Have fun, thanks for "listening," and I'll be "hear" next time! Shelby Rutledge, Speech/Language Pathologist, Lexington Hearing and Speech Center.



AROUND THE STATE

■ Mondays in **Danville** – Sign classes for families will begin on January 30th, at 6:30 in Lee Hall. There is no registration fee for family members and there are different skill-level classes available. Childcare for families is also available, provided by the KSD PTCA. Contact Ina Price at 859-239-7017 for more information.

■ Tuesdays in **Northern Kentucky** – Family sign classes at River Ridge Elem. From 6:00-7:30, are open to any family with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Call Sue Frisbee for more information: 859-426-8036.

■ Tuesdays in **Bowling Green** – Sign classes will be at the Greenwood Mall Food Court on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, from 5:30-7:00.

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■ Wednesdays in the Owensboro area - Family sign classes at Country Heights Elementary. From 5:30 to 7:00 are open to any family with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. 5:30 - 6:30 is the sign class and 6:30 to 7:00 is for parent support discussions. Call Heidi Givens for more information at (270) 852-7250 or email at hgivens@daviess.k12.ky.us

■ Thursdays in Northern Kentucky - Sign classes for professionals will be at River Ridge Elem. from 3:45-4:45, open to any professionals working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Call Sue at the number above.

■ Friday, March 10 - Michael Dorsey will be in Louisville at the Center of Accessible Living (Fincastle Bldg; 305 W. Broadway), from 1:00-3:00. Michael will talk/perform about his experience, strength, and hope as a recovering deaf alcoholic and drug addict. This is a free event with free food!!! For more information, contact Lindsey H. Williams at LHorner@sevendcounties.org or call 589-8910 ext. 124 (v) and 589-772-7216 (tty).

■ March 11 - Kentucky Association of the Deaf (KAD) will host a Mini Workshop and Social at the Kentucky School for the Deaf. Meet in the Brady Hall - Multi-purpose room from 9:00 am to 6:30 pm. Admission: (includes Lunch) - \$10.00; (without Lunch) - \$5.00 Age: 0-4 years old - Free; 5 to 17 years old - (Includes Lunch) - \$5.00. For more information: contact: Rhonda Bodner - RSBODNER@aol.com or J. Kevin Martin - j.k.martin@insightbb.com

■ Thursday, March 23rd - Brescia College in Owensboro will host HANDS ALIVE, a learning fair for students who are deaf and hard of hearing from 9:30-1:30. Contact Heidi Givens or Andy Hensley for more information.

■ March 23 - Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Conference - This one-day conference will be held at the Fayette Co. Extension Center in Lexington. Expert presenters will help relative-caregivers understand their legal options, opportunities for assistance, and the unique emotional needs of their families. This is a wonderful opportunity for grandparents and other relatives assuming primary care of young children. Contact Diana Caldwell at 859-258-3813 or dcaldwel@lfucg.com.

■ March 24th - Upper Cumberland Special Education Cooperative Regional Meeting. The meeting will be held at the Laurel County public library from 1000-12:00. The topic will be "transition". This

meeting is for teachers, speech therapists, interpreters, parents and anyone else who is interested. Contact Jerri LaFavers at 859-239-7017 ext. 2409 for more information.

■ Saturday, March 25 - SHHH (Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People) will meet at 10:30 am, at the Newport branch of the Campbell county Library (901 E. Sixth St.). This is a networking and support meeting... come and get to know other people with similar interests.

■ March 28 West Kentucky Silent Dinner Sign Language Group will meet in Benton at Hutchen's BBQ located at 601 Main St. (270) 443-4022. Please contact Paula Humphreys to let her know you will attend. Paula.Humphreys@ksd.kyschools.us or (270) 443-3055

■ March 31 - Wilderness Trail Special Education Cooperative Regional Meeting. The meeting will be held at the Transportation Annex in Somerset from 10:00-12:00. We will be discussing the role of interpreters and we will brush up on our sign skills. This meeting is for teachers, speech therapists, interpreters, parents and anyone else who is interested. Contact Jerri LaFavers at 859-239-7017 ext 2409 for more information.

HEADS UP:

- The National Association for the Deaf (NAD) invites you to their Tri-State Gala on Saturday, April 29th. They are celebrating NAD's 125th Anniversary at the Millennium Hotel in Cincinnati. Activities, including cocktails, dinner and a program will begin at 5:00 pm. The cost is \$55. per person. The deadline for reservations is April 15th. Contact Margie Bridges (Mbri6305@aol.com) or Kevin Martin (j.k.martin@insightbb.com) with questions.
- CINCINNATI HEALTH FAIR will be held on May 6th. The Key Note speaker will be Sue Thomas. Mark this date off for a hold and also join us in participation or setting up a booth to educate our community.
- Dayton Deaf Awareness Day - June 3 at the Carillon Historical Park. They will have entertainment, booths, displays, and prize drawings. Admission is free!
- DeaFestival '06 - Saturday, July 1, 2006, in Louisville. A full-day of FUN for the whole family! Learn more at the KCDHH website: <http://www.kcdhh.org/deafestival/index.html> or call the KCDHH office at V/T 502-573-2604 or V/T 800-372-2907.



SUMMER CAMPS and PROGRAMS



information.

The SFSC has been asked to share information with families about summer camps and programs. Each month, we will list different programs as we are informed about them. Please contact the programs you are interested in for more

The Bill Rice Ranch in Murfreesboro, TN offers 5 Weeks during the summer for Deaf young people and one week for Deaf adults. Deaf ages 9-19 may attend one week for Free. At Camp, the Deaf enjoy swimming, a sports tournament, meeting other Deaf from around America, joining a Deaf choir, daily Bible classes, and much more! For more information contact the Bill Rice Ranch: info@billriceranch.org; or, 1-800-253-RICE, ext. 125. For a ride to camp: **Western KY**, Mark Armstrong (270-443-6522; bkelly@csiweb.com); **Central KY**, Carla Chandler (502-535-5441; grnridge9@cs.com)

Summit 2006: Learn. Lead. Achieve is hosted by the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center's Honors Program. The program will run from June 19-30 and will offer both new and returning participants valuable learning experiences in the areas of higher-level academics and leadership skills.

The program is open to students from around the country currently in ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. Students will spend two weeks participating in a wide variety of activities, including Advanced Placement (AP) preview classes, leadership discussions and simulations, a journey through deaf history, and a weekend tour of Washington, D.C. Students will be housed in the Model Secondary School for the Deaf dormitories.

Registration, cost, accommodations, transportation, and other information will be available through our website soon. Enrollment for Summit 2006 is limited to 50 students. For additional information, contact Daniel.Dukes@gallaudet.edu.

Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center has an entire section of their website about

summer camps for deaf and hard of hearing children. They list camps, family learning vacations, and remedial clinics for deaf and hard of hearing children. Some programs are designed for the entire family! Check it out at <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/infotogo/142.html>

The A. G. Bell Association for the Deaf also has a big webpage that lists summer camps and programs by state. You can find it at: www.agbell.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?p=Summer_Camps



FAMILY LEARNING VACATION '06

The Statewide Family Support Center is busy planning the next Family Learning Vacation (FLV) for the weekend of June 10th. This is a wonderful event for the entire family... fun, cheap, and you learn a lot, too! Please take a few minutes to read the enclosed flyer. We are limited to 35 families, so send in your registration form soon.



You can also copy the registration information from the SFSC page of the KSD Website: www.ksd.k12.ky.us/SFSC/FLV.

If you or someone you know is interested in applying to be on the staff of the FLV Children's Program, please contact Cathy Howle or Pat Bruce for an application form.



READ CAPTIONS ACROSS AMERICA



On March 2, the Captioned Media Program (CMP) is launching a nationwide Read Captions Across America™ event as a part of the National Education Association's (NEA) "Read Across America." The NEA's "Read Across America" is the nation's largest reading celebration and focuses the country's attention on motivating children to read in addition to helping them master basic skills. Read Captions Across America™ is the first

Continued on Page 11

READ CAPTIONS ACROSS AMERICA *continued*

national reading event that puts emphasis on the importance of captioned media (DVD, video, CD-ROM, and Internet streaming) as a reading tool for children with or without a hearing loss.

Kentucky School for the Deaf is home to one of the regional CMP depositories. Linda Cannon is the Coordinator. She can provide you with "Read Captions Across America" posters, flyers or bookmarks (free) upon your request as well as ideas for activities to hold in your school. Please contact her if you would like to participate in "Read Captions Across America" activities: linda.cannon@ksd.kyschools.us or call her at 859-239-7017, ext 2222



STATEWIDE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS RESOURCE CENTER for the DEAF and HARD of HEARING

The Statewide Instructional Materials Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (IMRC) is part of the Kentucky Department of Education's Implementation Plan. It was established to provide more resources to families, teachers, and other professionals. The new IMRC is part of the Outreach Services of the Kentucky School for the Deaf, in Danville.

The IMRC houses information and lending materials for families, students, professionals, and educators across the state free of charge. In the Spring of 2005 a Needs Assessment was sent out to gather input as to the types of materials needed for the instruction of deaf and hard of hearing children. Results were compiled and resources are continuing to be purchased to best serve families and public school districts. Parents and others across the state are contacting the resource center for materials and information. A list of available materials will soon be posted on the Kentucky School for the Deaf's website (www.ksd.k12.ky.us). Keep an eye out for it. Currently, a list of materials is available upon request. Please contact Linda Cannon if you need assistance at linda.cannon@ksd.kyschools.us or call her at 859-239-7017, ext 2222.



SIGNED ENGLISH SKILLS EVALUATION

Barbara Martin from the Heuser Hearing Institute in Louisville will administer the ESSE-I (Educational Sign Skills Evaluation for Interpreters). This test is for educational interpreters and/or DHH classroom instructional assistants who are in training to become interpreters. She has made arrangements with the national SEE Center and will have the testing done at the Heuser Hearing Institute (home of the Louisville Deaf Oral School), located at 111 E. Kentucky Street.

The receptive portion will be from 10am-12pm, we will break for lunch (on-site), and then she will schedule 1 hour blocks throughout the afternoon for individual candidates to take the performance portion. She will also schedule performances on Saturday, depending on the number of requests received.



THE SUPPORT NETWORK FOR FAMILIES WITH DEAF/HARD OF HEARING CHILDREN

The statewide Support Network for Families will have it's semi-annual meeting on Saturday, March 11th in Elizabethtown. They will meet from 1:00 til 5:00 at (*contact the SFSC for the name of the meeting location*). This meeting is going to focus on how to encourage more local chapters to get set up across the state.

The Support Network is open to any family with a child who has a hearing loss... mild, moderate, severe, profound. They also welcome professionals and other people interested in the welfare and education of deaf and hard of hearing children in Kentucky. The group does not advocate one communication mode over another but strongly supports family choice.

If you are interested in joining the Support Network for Families with Deaf/Hard of Hearing Children, you can get a membership form by contacting

Heidi Givens
1712 Hollendale Dr. Apt. B
Owensboro, KY 42301

Or email her at: heidigasl@yahoo.com





Statewide Family Support Center
PO Box 27
Danville, KY 40423

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STATEWIDE FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER NEWSLETTER

March 2006



*Serving Kentucky's Families with
Children who are Deaf and Hard of
Hearing*

**PO Box 27
Danville, KY 40423**

The Statewide Family Support Center is located in Lee Hall on the campus of the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville. Families from across the state are welcome to call, visit, or email us with questions.

Cathy Howle
502-897-1583 ext. 108 (v)
800-540-3323 (v/tty)
cathy.howle@ksd.kyschools.us

Pat Bruce
859-239-7017 ext. 2503 (tty)
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